REMARKS

The specification has been amended to provide a cross-reference to the previously filed International Application.

Claim 11 has been amended to remove the improper multi-dependency.

Entry of the Preliminary Amendment and favorable action on the merits are respectfully requested.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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Attachment: Version With Markings Showing Changes Made

Rev. 02/12/01)

VERSION WITH MARKINGS SHOWING CHANGES MADE

The claims have been amended as follows:

11. (Amended) An antigen comprising the recombinant protein from merozoite of *Babesia caballi* as set forth in [any of claims 4 to 6] claim 4.

DESCRIPTION

GENE ENCODING PROTEIN FROM MEROZOITE OF *BABESIA CABALLI*, RECOMBINANT PROTEIN OBTAINED WITH SAID GENE AND USE THEREOF

TECHNICAL FIELD

The present invention relates to a protein derived from a merozoite of *Babesia caballi* (hereinafter also referred to as "BC"), a kind of equine Protozoa *Babesia*, a gene encoding said protein, an antibody specific to said protein, and a method for diagnosing equine babesiasis using the same.

BACKGROUND ART

Equine babesiasis is protozoiasis carried by the mites. The pathogen of this disease is equine Protozoa *Babesia*, among which two species of *Babesia caballi* and *Babesia equi* (hereinafter also referred to as "BE") are known.

Equine babesiasis is widely spread all over the world including South Europe, Asia, Russia, the Middle and Near East, Africa, and Central and South America. Clinically, this disease has main symptoms of anemia and jaundice with high fever and progresses either acutely or chronically. In acute cases, its lethality reaches about 10% or even as high as 50% in rare cases although it may somewhat vary with either of the two pathogens. On the other hand, the conditions after prognosis vary with either